

# Accelerated Benefits Demonstration



The Accelerated Benefits Demonstration project will provide immediate health benefits and employment supports to certain newly entitled Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiaries who have medical conditions that are expected to improve or could possibly improve with access to appropriate medical care. Under current law most SSDI beneficiaries must wait 24 months after cash benefits begin before they become eligible for Medicare. Thus, many people have no health insurance and therefore, have limited access to medical care during a period of time when access to those resources might serve to help improve their medical condition and thereby increase their ability to improve their self-sufficiency through employment.

## What States are involved?

The contractor will suggest several geographically dispersed areas in which to conduct the demonstration project.

## How does it work?

On January 20, 2006, the research organization MDRC was awarded the contract to implement and evaluate the Accelerated Benefits demonstration. The demonstration project will utilize a predictive model currently under development to identify newly entitled SSDI beneficiaries who have medical conditions that are likely to improve or could possibly improve with appropriate medical treatment.

Beneficiaries selected for the demonstration project will be provided medical benefits and employment supports. The target population will be SSDI beneficiaries who are

highly likely to benefit from immediate and continued medical care. Providing this treatment should result in improving their medical condition and thereby increasing the likelihood that they will be able to return to work and improve their self-sufficiency.

## SSA's Expectations

Certain SSDI beneficiaries are entitled to benefits with the designation "Medical Improvement Expected". Yet, the historical rate of return to work for these individuals is relatively low. We believe that this might be the result of deteriorating medical conditions due to lack of treatment while beneficiaries await entitlement to Medicare.

This research is designed to show that short term investment in health care for certain newly entitled SSDI beneficiaries might have long term pay-offs, in terms of improving their medical conditions and increasing the likelihood that they will return to work. The project will help SSA determine the costs and benefits associated with providing immediate medical benefits to these individuals.

## For More Information

If you have questions about the Accelerated Benefits Demonstration, please contact us at [ssa.demonstrations@ssa.gov](mailto:ssa.demonstrations@ssa.gov)

